

BACKGROUND

SIDELIGHTS ON THE SUDANESE ELECTIONS:

1. First popular elections in the Sudan, with 98 percent of the electorate illiterate and majority living primitive tribal life, presented international Election Commission with innumerable problems.
2. Inadequate communications, great distances, often only trails; 800 miles from Khartoum to Juba in the South. Tribes live in utter isolation and are very apathetic and suspicious. In Nuba Mountain area, over 180 different languages and dialects spoken.
3. Majority of voting by token secret ballot. In less sophisticated regions voting by acclamation; tribe lines up behind candidate of its choice, commonly its head man.

4. Black tribes of South -- Dinka, Nuer, Shilluk -- identified by tribal scars. Tall, erect, spear-carrying warriors in panther hides, feathers and other colorful but scanty garb frequently appeared at balloting booths bewildered and shuffling.
5. Candidates identified by pictures -- spear, sword, axe, hut, rooster, tree. Voter received token and instructed to place it in can bearing picture of his choice.
6. Voter often emerged from balloting but still clutching token and asking what he should do with it, despite voting dress rehearsals in many areas.
7. Several chiefs walked half the night with their tribes to balloting place; then decided they did not like the idea of voting after all and led tribes home again.

8. One election officer, with his committee and 30 porters carrying polling equipment, walked 100 miles through mud and water to hold election. He found only one candidate at journey's end. Officer later commented he felt "very tired."
9. One delegation, clad only in white ash paste and anklets, arrived too late to vote. Undaunted group performed tribal dance to prove their courage.
10. One group of Dinka arrived at voting center without their spears and found another group fully armed. First group took to the woods and voting delayed a day while regulations on arms were clarified.
11. Despite complexities, American observer in Khartoum estimates that about 50 percent of qualified electorate participated.

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12. International electoral commission  
supervising elections, despite various  
complaints and charges of fraud, apparently  
satisfied that the election was reasonably  
honest.

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